SILVIU G. TOTELECAN

VECINĂTATEA ÎN MUNŢII APUSENI: DISOLUŢII COMUNITARE

Ediţia a II-a,
revăzută şi adăugită



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NOTĂ
asupra ediţiei a II-a

La finele anului 2003, graţie colaborării dintre editurile clujene Napoca Star şi Argonaut, vedea lumina tiparului prima ediţie a volumului de faţă, carte cu doi referenţi ştiinţifici, aşa cum se obişnuia şi se obişnuieşte în universul lucrărilor de specialitate. Cartea avea la bază teza mea de doctorat în sociologie, *Vecinătatea, structuri şi funcţii în comunităţi din Munţii Apuseni,* teză susţinută public pe 21 octombrie 2003 la Universitatea „Babeş-Bolyai” din Cluj-Napoca, moment în care aveam calitatea de cercetător la fostul Institut de Cercetări Socio-umane al Academiei Române, Filiala Cluj-Napoca.

Între ceea ce, în 1997, am gândit despre această temă de cercetare, înscrisă administrativ-procedural la universitate ca titlu al unei viitoarei teze de doctorat în sociologie, şi recalibrările ulterioare, generate de parcurgerea celor şase ani de doctorantură, de acumularea de experienţă de cercetare de după absolvirea facultăţii, s-a produs, inevitabil, o oarecare „distanţare epistemică”. În răspăr cu „pretenţiile” la o tematizare a modalităţilor de structurare a comunitarului, anunţate prin formularea avansată iniţial a titlului tezei, concluziile la care ajunsesem, abordând tema „comunităţii” prin prisma destructurărilor ei, mă obligau măcar să „ascund” subtitlul *disoluţii comunitare* pe pagina de gardă a ediţiei, lăsând pe copertă un titlu „cuminte”, neangajant, aşa cum era *Vecinătatea în Munţii Apuseni*.

Astăzi însă, chestiunea „disoluţiei” a devenit, între timp, un loc comun, ba chiar un trop, pretinzându-se a fi însăşi legea „structurantă” de funcţionare sub care ni se înfăţişează socia(bi)litatea, ceea ce nu mai face deloc problematică expunerea în prim-plan (aşa cum apare în această nouă ediţie a cărţii) a celor două axe majore formulate în teză; şi anume, cea a *discursurilor* despre un liant social, presupus a fi peren şi mereu reperabil în Munţii Apuseni, dar şi cea a *descriptorilor* empirici ai „trăiniciei” sale, care, mai degrabă, atestă imposibilitatea de (re)coagulare a comunitarului, identificând şi germenii disoluţiei sale.

În urmă cu cincisprezecece ani, un aspirant la statutul de cadru didactic şi/sau de cercetător, *a fortiori* cineva deja înrolat în *sistemul* universitar şi de cercetare, avea deja obligaţia, măcar „morală", de a-şi publica, sub forma unei cărţi de autor, *teza,* o obligaţie de „prezentare de sine", de „carte de vizită" sau de „portofoliu" menită a condiţiona fie accesul în sistem, fie pe o treaptă profesională superioară. Între timp, odată cu impunerea progresivă a unor criterii tot mai restrictive de evaluare a „performanţei" în învăţământul superior şi în cercetarea ştiinţifică, a avea o *carte cu teză* a devenit, pare-se, mai puţin important decât locul *unde,* pe scena editorială, manuscrisul vede lumina tiparului. „Esenţială" rămâne, în orice caz, acumularea de puncte la numărătoarea „după barem", dată abia de plasarea contribuţiilor profesionale pe *lista scurtă* a „editurilor recunoscute", una oricum necontenit şi cu obstinaţie (re)constituită prin contribuţia mai mult sau mai puţin arbitrară a diverse şi succesive comisii „superioare" de evaluare profesională, iar nu elaborarea de conţinuturi epistemice propuse ca atare spre dezbatere, sub forma unei tipărituri de o *ţinută* cuvenită, membrilor breslei din care faci parte.

În plină „cultură" a „auditului scientometric", triumfând asupra oricărei alte logici instituţionale care să guverneze intelectual câmpurile cercetării, raţiuni de ordin pragmatic-administrativ mă obligă, aşadar, la retipărirea acestei cărţi. Pentru cineva din afara sistemului, dar chiar şi pentru cei dinăuntrul său, gestul ar putea părea superfluu, din moment ce nu e vorba de o lucrare ce, prin temă ori tratamentul acesteia, să fi devenit caducă ori lipsită de interes în ochii membrilor „comunităţii" profesionale ori, în fine, de una care ar avea, să zicem, nevoie de cine ştie ce „reîmprospătări" majore pentru a mai putea trece drept „ştiinţă socială actuală". Fiind o lucrare intrată deja în atenţia comunităţii profesionale,[1] ea începe

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[1] Prima ediţie a cărţii s-a bucurat de o bună receptare în rândul sociologilor, al antropologilor, dar şi al geografilor, unii dintre aceştia folosind-o în propriile lucrări pentru a pune în discuţie aspecte legate de spaţiul vicinal, de cel comunitar şi, în general, de regiunea Apusenilor. Câteva exemple în acest sens, în ordinea cronologică a apariţiilor editoriale: Dumitru Sandu, *Dezvoltare comunitară: cercetare, practică ideologie* (Iaşi: Polirom, 2005); Vintilă Mihăilescu (coord.), *Etnografii urbane: cotidianul văzut de aproape* (Iaşi: Polirom, 2009); Adrian Hatos, *Participarea comunitară în România urbană: lideri, participanţi şi spectatori ai acţiunilor colective din vecinătăţile din blocurile construite înainte de 1990* (Oradea: Edit. Universităţii din Oradea, 2009); Ana-Neli Ianăş, *Ţara*

însă să fie instituţional trecută cu vederea, exclusiv pe considerentul că editura în care ea a fost publicată nu mai este, azi, una „recunoscută” de sistem. E de reamintit aici cititorului că o editură până mai ieri acceptată, aşa cum a fost cazul celor două care mi-au găzduit prima ediţie, poate fi exclusă din lista scurtă, poate cădea „în dizgrație”, din varii motive şi prin tot soiul de vicisitudini care însă, oricum le-am judeca, rămân cu totul independente de autorul unei lucrări şi, cu atât mai mult, de calitatea produsului său intelectual.

Mutarea accentului de pe autor şi operă pe editura care-l promovează şi-i comercializează lucrările, cel puţin în Occident, nu mai este demult o chestiune nouă, formula de „împachetare” a „ce se face” fiind prezentă în mai toate câmpurile profesionale, de la cele artistice (unde lumea se învârte în jurul poziţiei ocupate de galeria de artă pe scena-piaţă specifică) până la cele tehnice (unde, fără suport instituţional, creativul nu are cum accesa resursele enorme de care dispune, global, concurenţa), mai peste tot economicul înstăpânindu-se asupra epistemicului (şi, mai larg, a culturalului). Suplimentar, în cazul românesc, autorul mai e nevoit în bună măsură şi să îşi autofinanțeze publicarea producţiei ştiinţifice, cu deosebire cea sub formă de carte, şi, de asemenea, să se ocupe de distribuţia ei dacă doreşte *vizibilitate,* întrucât, cu mici excepţii, editurile se rezumă la a acoperi doar tehnic partea tipografică a muncii (intelectuale, editoriale) de transformare a manuscrisului în tipăritură (ştiinţifică), produs industrial brut care e, apoi, împachetat şi livrat în vrac, sub formă de colet, autorului.

Dacă într-un context editorial ceva mai aşezat decât cel autohton *transferul de prestigiu* economico-simbolic – şi, deci, de *putere,* până la urmă – de pe munca intelectuală pe cea editorială este cumva mai uşor de acceptat, în sensul că editurile fac realmente ceva mai mult decât muncă tipografică, construind, în condiţiile complexe ale unei pieţe (multimodulare, de altfel), un „produs”

Almăjului. Studiu de geografie regională (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2011); Ana-Maria Pop & V. Zotic, Functional Aspects of Urban Communities: “The New Neighbourhoods”. Case Study: Viilor Neighbourhood, Sighişoara Municipality, Mureş County (in *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai, Geographia*, *LVI* (1), 2011, 141–150); Ioana Scridon, Neighbourhood Relationships between German Ethnic Groups from Romania. Case study: the Zipsers from Vişeu de Sus, Maramureş County (in *Journal of Settlements and Spatial Planning*, *3* (1), 2012, 51–56).

indexabil conceptual drept un compus de felul *autor/operă,* adică se ocupă de finanţarea publicaţiilor, de marketing şi publicitate şi, nu în ultimul rând, de dialogul cu autorul în munca de îngrijire a manuscrisului. La noi, acest *transfer de prestigiu* se impune sec, prin pură reglementare juridică. În acest sens, drept dovadă, a se vedea cea mai recentă normă de reglementare a standardelor profesionale în ştiinţe[2], conform căreia o carte de sociologie nu există „în ochii" sistemului decât dacă ea este publicată la una din editurile menţionate în listele aşa-numite A1 sau A2. Chiar şi trecându-se cu vederea că, până la momentul de faţă, lista A1 nici măcar nu a fost dată publicităţii, după atâta vreme de la adoptarea reglementării, nu pot fi trecute sub tăcere dezavantajele în carieră şi de prestigiu profesional „prestabilite" de simpla existenţă a unor asemenea liste (în contrapartidă cu avantajele, iarăşi prestabilite, ale unora), dezavantaje care nu-i afectează doar pe aspiranţii la titlul de profesor universitar sau la echivalentul lui din domeniul cercetării ştiinţifice, ci pe toţi membri acestui corp profesional, universitari şi cercetători deopotrivă, obligaţi fiecare, înainte de a scrie măcar un rând la propriul manuscris, de a recurge la interminabile metaanalize, inclusiv la elaborarea de (improbabile) prognoze, pe termen mediu şi lung, asupra viabilităţii economico-epistemice a diverselor parcele ale spaţiului editorial românesc sau de aiurea.

Prin mijlocirea acestui act normativ şi în baza intereselor pasagere ale membrilor, de la un moment dat sau altul, ai zisei Comisii de sociologie şi ştiinţe politice şi administrative, o operă „vizibilă" *de facto,* aşa cum este prima ediţiei a acestei cărţi, trece în regimul „invizibilităţii" *de jure.* Pentru cineva care scrie de ceva vreme împotriva felului în care „standardele în sociologie" au fost

[2] Este vorba de Ordinul nr. 6129/20.12.2016 al Ministrului Educaţiei Naţionale şi Cercetării Ştiinţifice privind aprobarea standardelor minimale necesare şi obligatorii pentru conferirea titlurilor didactice din învăţământul superior, a gradelor profesionale de cercetare-dezvoltare, a calităţii de conducător de doctorat şi a atestatului de abilitare, cu anexele sale. De interes pentru sociologie este Anexa nr. 25 a acestui act normativ, referitoare la Comisia de sociologie, ştiinţe politice şi administrative, în care, la secţiunea „Standarde minimale ce trebuie îndeplinite cumulativ", în „standardul C3: criterii pentru dobândirea titlului de profesor universitar sau cercetător ştiinţific gradul I", se precizează că numărul de cărţi la care candidatul este unic autor sau prim autor trebuie să fie de cel puţin o carte la o „editură cu prestigiu internaţional" listată A1 sau cel puţin două cărţi publicate la „edituri cu prestigiu recunoscut" listate A2.

elaborate fără a se ţine seamă de calitatea muncii intelectuale desfăşurate în profesie, cu deplasarea netă a accentului de pe conţinutul lucrărilor pe locul publicării lor, în numele „externalizării" şi „obiectivării" evaluărilor profesionale, a devenit din ce în ce mai clar în ultimii ani că nu se mai poate spera la înfiriparea unei mase critice de reacţie intelectuală şi reflexivă în sânul profesiunii şi că, în consecinţă, fiecare muncitor intelectual din domeniul sociologiei e nevoit să adopte formule personale de rezilienţă menite să-i prezerve munca de până atunci. Asta, desigur, dacă nu e dispus să accepte ştergerea ei cu buretele, dintr-un simplu condei. De aici şi *miza pragmatică* de publicare a unei a doua ediţii, revăzute şi adăugite, la Presa Universitară Clujeană, editură figurând (pe moment!) între cele care compun lista A2 pentru ştiinţe sociale.

Oricât de importantă – cel puţin pe plan personal – ar fi această miză, ea parcă tot n-ar fi una suficientă pentru ca imboldul de a rescoate în lume o carte, cu teza ei cu tot, să fie întrutotul justificabil, mai ales atunci când eşti obişnuit a lucra într-un regim epistemic, şi nu într-unul pur productivist. De aceea, mi se pare că a readuce în actualitate o a doua ediţie are sens şi atunci când gândurile şi munca de descifrare a unei anume „realităţi sociale", scrise cu ani în urmă în paginile lucrării, rămân la fel de actuale şi în prezent, când nu simţi nevoia de a le renega, reinterpreta, actualiza, pentru că ele s-au înscris deja într-un reflexiv prezent continuu. Astfel, *miza epistemică* a demersului de republicare nu ţine de aducerea la zi a teoriei sau a empiriei (adaosurile de interviuri aprofundate ar „ajuta" doar la a supradocumenta, în exces, agravarea unei stări de fapt pe care deja de pe atunci o întrezăream, şi aflată acum în plină desfăşurare, anume cea a disoluţiei comunitare). Ea constă în replasarea lucrării în contextul actual al câmpului cercetării sociale din spaţiul românesc, pentru a da posibilitatea (re)citirii ei de către noi categorii (şi noi generaţii) de cititori, în speranţa apariţiei unor suplimente interpretative inedite rezultate din lectura şi examinarea *hic et nunc* a unei cercetării, a unei munci intelectuale readuse la lumină.

Recitirea lucrării cu un ochi atent la ce s-a mai scris în ultimii ani pe subiectul vecinătăţii[3], mi-a oferit prilejul de a constata că

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[3] Vezi, spre exemplu, recentul volum scos de J. MacLeod, *Ain't no makin'it: Aspirations and attainment in a low-income neighborhood* (Routledge, 2018) sau

investigarea intersecției dintre practici și percepții într-un context spațial, care stă la baza efectelor vecinătății (Sampson, 2012: 57), rămâne una de maximă actualitate şi azi, când încă persistă clivajul analitic între axarea fie pe componenta „umană” (în manieră socio-antropologică), fie pe cea „teritorială” (pe linia geografiei sociale) în cercetarea entităţilor socio-spaţiale. Desigur, această „defalcare” este prezentă şi în cartea mea (de la satul risipit, regiunea Munţilor Apuseni, socio-demografia zonei, statistica ariei socio-culturale cercetate etc., până la neîncrederea faţă de celălalt, străin sau intracomunitar, cooperarea sau lipsa ei, conflictul sau sprijinul intra- şi intergeneraţional în Ţara Moţilor etc.), dar menirea ei este de a evidenţia posibile elemente care ţin împreună cuplajul socialului cu spaţialul sau, spus şi mai îngrijit, care structurează *spaţializarea socialului* şi, în acelaşi timp, *socializarea spaţialului*.

Ceea ce face diferenţa (şi distincţia) între regiuni sunt granularităţile disoluţiilor comunitare, nu caracterul generic al procesului disolutiv pe traseele căruia, în 2003, vedeam că se înscrie inevitabil şi cea a Munţilor Apuseni, o tendinţă, solidară cu cea occidentală, ce-şi aşezase deja premisele şi la noi. Am fost interesat să urmăresc diferenţierile de la nivel microregional, care, deşi empiric încă mai fac cazuistică, se pierd, sau nu se mai regăsesc în descrierile macroanalitice, „obliterate” de haloul metanarativ al „modernităţii lichide”. Pentru că regiunea Apusenilor a intrat, la noi, printre ultimele în procesul de disoluţie comunitară, acolo încă mai putem vedea rămăşiţele unei texturi sociale ceva mai dense, ale unui liant social ceva mai coeziv, pâlpâiri ale localului, urme concrete de recalcitranţă la lichefiere. Aceasta este şi una dintre motivaţiile încercării mele de detaşare faţă de o „citire” a vecinătăţii ca simplă „instituţie socială rurală”, aşa cum s-a impus ea prin tipologia lui *Nachbarschaft*, şi să încerc lectura ei mai degrabă ca agregare, ca *asamblaj de socio-teritorialitate,* ce lasă spaţiu de manifestare contingenţei socio-istorice, unul în care *miza reflexivă* priveşte (de)construcţia comunităţii – şi a noţiunii ei – în sens clasic (una a valorilor împărtășite, a solidarităţii şi legăturilor strânse), şi nu funcţionarea ei.

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lucrarea lui R. J. Sampson, *Great American city: Chicago and the enduring neighborhood effect* (University of Chicago Press, 2012).

Acestea fiind zise, îmi rămân de făcut câteva remarci finale despre ce înseamnă „revizuirea” şi „adaosul” de pe frontispiciul acestei „aduceri la zi” a lucrării, în condiţiile în care nu rescrierea ei a intrat, fundamental, în discuţie, aşa cum, probabil, deja s-a înţeles până acum. Faţă de precedenta ediţie, pe lângă rândurile acestei *Note*, îi mai ofer cititorului şi o *Postfaţă,* în care accentul cade, de această dată, nu pe autoreflecţia decalată în timp a experienţei epistemice a construcţiei unei cărţi cu teză, ci decurge din reflecţia asupra experienţei de evaluator-şi-referent de teze (ale altora), postură care-mi permite şi ea, la rândul şi în felul ei, să integrez expresia de faţă a muncii mele doctorale în pragmatica reproducerii câmpului profesional din care fac parte. Fie și schițat, *Postfața* este, între altele, o reflecție asupra cadrelor instituționale care susțin procedurile socio-epistemice de recunoaștere a profesionalizării, deci a accesului propriu-zis în câmp.

Astfel, revenind la revizia de text, ea a însemnat, concret, corectura tacită de ordin gramatical şi ortografic (în măsura în care inadvertenţele nu mi-au scăpat la o recitire totuşi diletantă în raport cu acribia presupusă pentru un redactor profesionist de carte…), regularizarea semnelor de punctuaţie, refacerea bibliografiei după formatul APA, reformatarea interviurilor din anexă, rearanjarea în pagină a figurilor şi tabelelor versiunii iniţiale datorată schimbării oglinzii paginii etc.; în general, acele operaţiuni care intră în categoria corecturi de limbă, de stil de redactare, ca şi de tehnoredactare.

Întrucât, la data conceperii şi scrierii lucrării, dispuneam doar de datele Recensământului populaţiei şi al locuinţelor din 7 ianuarie 1992, iar cât privea Recensământul populaţiei şi al locuinţelor din 18 martie 2002 aveam acces doar la variabile agregate macrostructural, nu şi la cele specifice nivelului unităţilor administrative locale, ca să nu mai vorbesc de indisponibilitatea datelor Recensământului populaţiei şi al locuinţelor din 20 octombrie 2011 (în prima ediţie recursesem la prognoze demografice pentru analiza de trenduri prezumtive), a fost necesar ca în subcapitolul II.3. („Regiunea Munţilor Apuseni”) să operez anumite corecţii statistice în text, precum şi în unele tabele sau figuri din ea. Pentru acurateţea datelor, am introdus în completare noi note de subsol, marcate cu asteriscuri. O asemenea împrospătare n-am avut-o defel în vedere în privinţa suplimentării materialului calitativ-empiric existent,

considerând că, pentru eventuale suplimente interpretative (lăsate în sarcina noilor cititori), e importantă, dimpotrivă, tocmai prezervarea caracterului documentar de „istorie orală” corespunzătoare momentului temporal al scrierii princeps a cărţii, iar nu descrierea, potrivit momentului actual, a stării în care s-ar afla vecinătatea în Munţii Apuseni.

ABSTRACT
(of the 2003 edition)

I. REFLEXIVE KNOWLEDGE

I.1. The enlightenment. The aim of this work is to elaborate a socio-anthropological analysis focused on an eclectic concept, a notion full of very diverse meanings, that of *neighborhood*. This concept has many hypostases, but the social sciences were especially concerned with those neighborhoods, whose fundamental characteristic laid in their capacity to *delimit themselves* from the other elements of the territorial-administrative units which form the village or the city together with the former ones.

Most of the authors concentrated their efforts in dealing with this field, focused on a *vicinal space* in which the marking points, charted by the local community on the physical and social space, were know by each and every member of the community, but they ignored the *socio-spatial entities* which characterize themselves by means of a permanent *renegotiation* process of the symbolical and physical (geographic) borders which form the framework for the social life of its members. Within this framework which has to be applied to the social reality of Apuseni Mountains, this work has to deal with an "imperative" focus on this second vicinal category – i.e. *the unnamed neighborhood* which, although as functionality is quite similar to the *named neighborhood* (this is the name of the neighborhoods which could be identified by symbols, territorial locations and, in some cases, even by their names) becomes in essence very different from that one, due to the fact that vicinal practices take place in a "natural" way, by virtue of a pre-comprehension not always uniformly perceived by those who "call themselves neighbors".

The option for this area of inquiry requests, in a certain proportion, the detachment from the interpretations of a notion of neighborhood that is very much discussed in the scientific literature, in which the *local praxis* was governed by a why rigorously

presented normative-habitual framework, reflected most of the times in rules and mores, known by all members of the respective neighborhood.

To understand neighborhood means to abandon the *traditional opposite* horizons in the light of which the sociologist and respectively the anthropologist try to search the objects from the social world, is an inward perspective or an outward, and to concentrate upon *the median zones* of investigation, to consciously locate the socio-anthropological "nearby" the searched object or in order to conciliate the two perspectives and to describe the positive elements which emerge from each one. Through a "go-forth-and-back" movement between the interior and the exterior of the vicinal space, through a programmatic change of accent the detachment and the perspective from without could be brought forth when the *system/organism,* within which the individualities foster their social life is absent and those individualities become too gradated, and, at the same time the interest for the enormous number of meanings-identities hold in reality by the notion of *neighbor* (stranger, enemy, acquaintance, friend, someone one needs, even neighbor) for mutual dual communication (a perceivable vicinal dialogue and a presupposed second dialogue) and the messages sent through the channels of vicinal social network, for the dynamic movement of vicinal social relationships always changing their appearance, and so on.

The epistemological paradigm of this paper (a permanent oscillation between the *scientific speculation,* the *academic stringency,* and last but not least, the *unconventional construction* cultural and reflexive in essence), in order to comprehend as many meanings of an "open concept" (Noica, 1995: 14) such as neighborhood, as it could, has proved to be a permanent essay of cognitive-intellectual range in the *proximity* and/or the neighborhood of an object of research which, by its nature, is governed by vague and approximation.

This gradual rapprochement *("apropiere treptată",* in Romanian language) to the object of this research meant *to search* and *to choose*, from the entire methodological paddle offered by the spectrum of the field of social sciences the sensitive elements of the human being, promoters of the researcher's approach to the knowing subject (Chapter I. *Reflexive knowledge);* then it follows *the*

assignation of ethnographic, economic, socio-cultural coordinates at a zonal and local level of the Apuseni Mountains community (Chapter II. *Marks and Anchorages);* the paper continues by an analysis of some of the *possible hypostases* in which the neighborhood appears: spatiality, territoriality proximity, community (Chapter III. *The neighborhood – analytical foundations);* followed by the theoretical framing of the concept of neighborhood on the continuum formed by the social institution and institutionalized social practices (Chapter IV. *Theoretical construction);* and finally, the empiric relocation of the neighborhood within the context of late modernity by outlining the transformations which took place within it, by emphasizing the transition from the *profound vicinity* to the *apparent vicinity* (Chapter V. *Empirical reconstruction).*

I.2. Epistemological framework. This section begins by discussing the *break* between social sciences and philosophy, which finally succeeds to compromise both knowledge and reflection. This work tries to demonstrate that the analysis of the *subjective* relationship between the scientist and the social world and of the *objective* relationships taken by him as presupposition, has become, as a consequence of this "schism", "the nothingness" of any savant analysis (both subjective and objective, Bourdieu, 2000: 37) and that a proper knowledge of the social reality, of the possible meanings offered by the reality of life, with its always specific could not be reached without that *go-forth-and-back movement* from facts to ideas, meant to assure the development of interpretations which go beyond the limits of our given framework, the ways in which our ancestors used these ideas.

A transit to as *active research* of the world, the evulsions of information instead of the simple "digestion" of sensorial given facts which penetrate us through our eyes and our ears, followed by a process of "effervescence" (Popper & Konrad, 1997: 46), a reconstruction of social sciences starting from a reevaluation of the triad *narrativity – interpretation – intersubjectivity,* all these are main ideas proposed as pathways in this work. *The narrative,* beside its capacity to reflect the human behavior, also has another advantage – its power of shaping (Renato, 1993: 130) and *the narrative knowledge,* using a variety of speech roles embrace much easier the "imperatives" of a fragmentary postmodernity.

This main interest of the paper consisted in the narratives which tell stories about contemporary events and real persons (Britton & Pelegrini – eds., 1990: 226), and within this framework the work focuses on the analysis of *deep structures* of language (Chomsky, 1970: 52), of the meanings "rooted" in words (Noica, 1970: 5). The work is constructed as an approach of the perspective of human action, by a detailed discussions of the *extrinsic* dimension (people engaged in the creation and in the transmission of the narratives), *intrinsic* dimension (the narratives themselves), and *epistemic* (the social representation, respectively the social reconstruction of reality achieved by the local community) of the narrative process.

I.3. Methodological specifications. The sociologists, the anthropologists and so on, by keeping more or less an artificial distance between *the observer* and *the observed,* by alternating the "field" interpretation with the "library" interpretation, constantly try to enact a narrative attitude by retelling stories about the world, attitude which emerges, among others, from their methodological options. The sociological inquiry is used here to illustrate *the extension* of the concept of neighborhood/vicinity, that is of the framework within which it reveals itself (the village as demographic and social structure, but also as territory, as resources, as technical-administrative unit, etc.), and respectively the qualitative interview for a detailed "vision" upon the relationships between neighbors, upon the their interpretations of the meanings of the word "neighbor", of the dimension of neighborhood.

The *objective hermeneutics* holds the existence of a social reality beyond the context created by inquiry or by interview (often *double-represented,* by the examined subjects on the one hand, and the researcher on the other) and this social reality can be brought to light by approaching the "primary-documents" as narrative-texts. This objective hermeneutics was used against the cultural gap, against not comprehending the sense, and for appropriating what in the beginning was strange (Ricoeur, 1999: 142).

The phenomenological analysis, the description of some episodes from the life of the community which stress the "living and the feeling" within the vicinal framework is used to "suit" the understanding. At last, the mixing up, the combination and

recombination of *narrative-interpretative-phenomenological* fragments has been accomplished following Glaser's and Strauss' approaches elaborated since 1967, which is *Grounded Theory*.

In brief, the research method used for the analysis of the neighborhood was a programmed, systematic and organized approach of it – of the four-folded aspects: spatiality, territoriality, community, proximity, trying to empirically reconstruct it, starting from the fieldwork (field observation and analysis).

I.4. The "I" and the Other in intersubjectivity. Phenomenological hermeneutics becomes truly feasible when the subjectivity confronts the intersubjectivity, in proportion as one's own vision upon inter-subjectivity overpasses the borders of inner world (Crossley, 1996: 24) and it opens up for otherness. For to perceive the other not only as a body or as a statistic unit, the transit from the *I – he/she* type of relationship to an *I – you* type, relationship in which the other reveals himself/herself also as spirit. In this perspective, his/her moods and behaviors become subject of "daily" observation.

Often, instead of the *meeting* between the researcher and the researched subject, there is a *non-meeting* to deal with, some kind of event without past and without future, which only pretends to be a real meeting (Bauman, 2000a: 165). This moment of the investigation has to be over-passed in order to obtain the key-code to the object of the investigation itself. The *auto-ethnographic* (Danehay – eds., 1997) option that is the practice of *natives studying natives* was used to accomplish that goal. This practice also allows the "oscillation" between the native-position and that of the writer/author.

In this light, the research focused on the *neighborhood in Apuseni Mountains communities* also had to be understood as a form of searching an identity, the researcher's coming back to his roots, to his native world, to the world of his childhood (Iluţ, 2000: 127). We are simultaneously *near-by* and *far-away* from the other (from the Apuseni Mountains inhabitants), and this hypostasis was used to understand the local signals and meanings but mostly it was used for opening new ways of communication with the other.

II. MARKS AND ANCHORAGES

II.1. The local as world. K. Popper (1998: 16-17) suggests that no matter how "minuscule" the local decoupage would be, that one is taken into account for one's social analysis, none of the three worlds is missing: neither the *physical* one – the world of the bodies and of states of affairs, of the physical forces and processes; nor the *psychic* one – the world of feelings and of conscious and unconscious psychic processes; or the world of *spiritual* products. Within this context, the present work regards the visible or the *half-visible world from around us,* especially the reality of daily life – the physical and socio-cultural world which existed before us and before the other, pre-constituted and pre-organized (Schutz, 1976: 229).

Following, in this work, the analytical views of some of the theorists of modernity and especially those of late modernity, it results as a conclusion in accordance with M. Foucault's ideas and in partial disagreement with A. Giddens, that the gap between space and time, gap mostly provoked by modernity, "maintains" the relationships between "those who are absent", and constantly diminishes the frequency of the *face-to-face* kind of relationships. Our times, compared with pre-modernity, could be characterized as having a very low level of stability of social relationships.

Modernity is often defined as a world of *strangers,* a world in which our social contacts with the others in daily life become more and more *impersonal.* Beyond the *familiarity* of the household or of the local neighborhood (this being also too used as will be demonstrated in the following chapter) it is very difficult, if not impossible to find something else than anonymity.

II.2. The issue of the custom. This subchapter is about the issue of the *coagulant element* of the social practices, taken into account by the individuals (the question is: do they still?) by enacting their behavior to the rules imposed by it. The problem here is how to show whether or not tradition still plays an important role in the rural environment, whether or not it still *rules* over the social relationships established within the local space or whether, on the contrary, it now has to deal with its *dilution* or even with its *disintegration.* The points of view expressed by George Em. Marica in his work entitled *The Phenomenon of Tradition,* published more than half a century ago, outline the fact that that was the very moment

when tradition, in its "classic" (archaic) form was for the first time doubted.

After analyzing the functional hypostasis under which tradition reveals itself: as *transmission-generalization, conservative-accumulative*, or in its phase of *selecting* the tendencies and fundamental values of the past, it could be concluded that the major socio-cultural changes brought about by modernity (i.e. the transformation of social institutions, behaviors and so on), also reflect unavoidably on tradition itself. Even in the rural space, probably the "last" place where tradition can be spoken about in a *traditional* way, a severe dilution of aforetime rural institutions (i.e. closed economy, communal organization etc.) becomes observable, and the people who live in a rural environment, it can be seen at short notice, only with great effort succeed to conserve the "traditional valuations". The real confrontation of the individuals with the present spectrum of daily life, the close contact with modern ways of living is affecting the rural environment.

The people living in Apuseni Mountains have to appeal to a *dual perception* of reality, to oscillate between a world in which the financial coercions are persistent and a world in which spiritual compulsion dominates. In proportion as there is no longer a coincidence of the two levels, their human condition *suspended* between what is traditional and modernity has to be assumed because it becomes an integral part of their "being".

II.3. The region of Apuseni Mountains. This chapter describes the characteristics of the "youth stage" in the evolution of the population from Apuseni Mountains, defined by a process of moving toward the heights. Due to this process, the mountains get be most populated, given the "survival" possibilities they offer. The next interesting focus of this part is on the contemporary period of time, when the *bond between the human being and territory* is no longer a *protective* one, but a *superincumbent* one. That would be the reason why the population has to leave the massif and to find resources for survival somewhere else.

There are plenty of angles used by the researches who represent certain scientific field to approach, in different ways, the discussed zone, without always searching the "one and the same area". That is the reason why this work also focuses on the problem

of determining the accurate social and spatial compass of this region. From the geographical discourse to the socio-anthropological one, a very large scale of modalities "marks out" the limits of this area.

To "reconstruct" the region from certain territorial and administrative units considered to be parts of Apuseni Mountains is a methodological option. Its advantage resides in the fact that it offered the *best possible approximation* of the region with respect to its collectivities. This fact helped to gather quite precarious socio-demographic information based on which certain tendencies of the population from this part of the mountain could be contoured.

Analyzing the partial results of the 2002 Census of population and homes, it became apparent that the population of this region is subject to a process of continuous decrease. The *constantly negative demographic increase* started at the end of XIXth century and at the beginning of XXth century. The "restrictions" established by the mountain ecosystem (Mihu, 1971: 111) mostly in the unfolding of agricultural activities: the fact that there are a small number of fields for agriculture and their surface is quite small, the fact that there are unproductive lands etc., all these have as consequences *the practice of a subsistence agriculture*. Only by cultivating the tracks from within or near the households a proper living can hardly be assured, and thus, the people living the Apuseni Mountains need to search for new, alternative ways of finding supplementary financial support for their households. This search is often transformed into a big process of migration to urban areas.

After highlighting the demographical problems present in this region (small-sized rural communities, massive migration, mortality etc.) at the end of this subchapter, the necessary elaboration of a certain social analysis centered on social structures situated between the extremities of the *household – village* continuum will be emphasized. Illustrating the contributions to the study of Romanian rural space made by the representatives of the *monographic school* and the authors that had complementary research options, the hypothesis of the necessity of a passage from a detached analysis of rural communities to a *reflexive* one that should bring forth the village as a space of social interactions generated by the proximity of the same people, will be advanced.

II.4. Specific realities. It is quite difficult to realize some inquiries, based on the *principles of selective research* in the region of Apuseni Mountains, because even if within this space there are villages accredited with an *administrative* role, there are not any *geographical* villages, and the other way round, meaning that there are some references to certain *territorial extensions,* those do not have a *formal-administrative* equivalent. Thus, it became necessary "to give up" the idea of doing some representative (with a statistic significance) researches of the Apuseni Mountains villages, in favor of a less pretentious one, that is a research which dignifies some of the problems with which the *household,* today the reference unit of the rural environment is confronted.

To do some sociological inquiries in some of the Apuseni Mountains villages (Dealu Negru, Finciu, Văleni in the Cluj County; Bilăneşti, Certeje, Horea, Mihăieşti, Peleş, Sohodol in the Alba County) meant to "look" from the village "*ulitza"* (alley) into the household, to watch the family (families) within the household, to observe the daily problems of its members. The result of this inquiry was that over 85% of the observed households have an average monthly total income (that is the financial correspondent resulted from the accumulation both of the salaries and of the selling of cereals, hay, milk and lactate or products made of meat) was twice or three times lower than the one established at the level of national economy at that time.

The discontentment generated by the living conditions "provided" by the local world of Apuseni Mountains tends to become more and more radicalized. It also has an immediate effect on the social relationships by producing a change of perspective upon communitarian *feelings.* The empirical realities researched succeeded to outline the existence of a great process of modifying man's attitudes towards a certain traditional way of being, which no longer has the power of dealing with the problems raised up by "newness".

For example, *to make* the goods *common* (to get and to use in common the tools needed in agriculture) the process that best characterizes pre-modernity, is more and more disregarded, being almost entirely eliminated from among the solutions to the daily problems of the majority of people living in Apuseni Mountains. The *social estrangement* replaces the cooperation between the households, the asking for the neighbors' help or the help of some

other person from outside the domestic areas seen as belonging to the past.

III. THE NEIGHBORHOOD – ANALYTICAL FOUNDATIONS

III.1. Spatiality. If the first chapter of this work aimed at achieving an introduction for the socio-anthropology of neighborhood, and the second tried to present the field research, the present chapter and the next one aim at treating the *conceptual space* in which neighborhood *manifests*. This chapter begins with an analysis of the problems of social space, respectively with an "upheaval" of the false presumption that the social space was born from a *metaphorical transposition* of the concepts resulted from a certain comprehension of the physical space. Distance, the key-concept around which the approach of space takes shape, was first a *subjective* one, its *objectivation* coming much later, together with the invention of the metal bar called meter.

In the context of modernity, where the place (social) is *separated* by space (physical), the social space transforms from denotative into connotative, transformation that brings along its splitting up. In this sense recent theories make numerous references to *spatial practices, representations of space, representational spaces;* or in another register*, a cognitive, esthetic, moral* space*,* to offer only few of the most frequent examples.

Spatiality – experiencing space, accepted by pre-modernity, denied within the context of modernity and discovered in post-modernity, comes again into the attention of researchers, who are progressively "forced" to accept the idea that *we do not live in a homogenous and void space,* but, on the contrary, in a space full of qualities, a space, maybe, haunted by phantoms (Foucault, 2001: 253). Another shade brought by late modernity, refers to the passage from the *social spatialization* to *spatial socialization,* from the *local* village to the *global* one. It is up to the local communities whether they make this passage unproblematic and if, in the end, we witness their *dissolution* or, on the contrary, their *development*.

III.2. Territoriality. The perception and the experience of physical space is less and less linked to a local "embedded" in the territory, as it was few decades ago, when the social life of the

inhabitants of a certain area was unfolding in a territorial area of small extent. Not even the "mountain", which, generally appears to be more conservative, can elude from the confrontation with limitation and then with the relativity of references (Kripke, 2001: 134). "The words" rooted in the ground, with a century old life, "die" here, too, even if in a much slower way and often leaving traces that hold on for thousands of years.

In other terms, we talk about a replacement of the *geographical* maps with the *mental* (cognitive) ones, of "reality" with its representation, of *de*-scription and *pre*-scription (Olsson, 1994: 216) of a set of points and of the way in which one finds his/her way among these, with the *image* and the *story* of their significations. Under these influences, human settlements are more and more perceived not as *"localization"* in the territory, or in terms of their expansion, but through the means of *neighborhood relations which are significant* from the perspective of its points or elements.

In the light of the issues stated in this subchapter, it can be concluded that vicinity is a specific *social spatial entity,* that builds up on the basis of a certain *social relation* (if we see it as spatiality) and/or *spatial* (if we understand it as territoriality).

III.3. Proximity. As the *substantial space* of archaic geometry is "replaced" with the *casual,* contemporaneous relative one, and the other one is more and more spatially close to us, from a social point of view this "goes more and more further" from us, in spite of the "collapse" of the distinction between *close* and *far*.

Within these coordinates, this paper aims at observing what was happening with the *medium term,* placed between here and there, a place where live people who are apparently close to one another, called by the socio-anthropological literature *proximity* – the field of all intentions, without being intentional. Proximity is the field of "moral imperative" to be responsible (Lévinas, 1981), the term eluding its spatial connotations (in the sense of physical space) and also to the social ones, more precise to those connotations based on a rational understanding of the distance (in its double hypostasis, both physical and social). The relation of proximity supposes "to forget" the *reciprocity* and focuses upon attributions, obligations, previous to any commitment, an anteriority which is "older" than what is *a priori*.

A category (having ambivalent features) which not long ago was *isolated* in the social space – *the foreigners* are more and more present in this space. Not only that these can no longer be kept at the external limit of the space of neighborhood, but they also bring a *special complication* of the social relations. Confronting with new types of behavior, brought, in a first phase by the foreigners and then imposed by others nearby, who readapt the behavior to the requirements of late modernity, the *primary groups* "specific" to pre-modernity pass through a process of *re-settling*. The individuals feel more acutely the pressure generated by the conflict between too much generosity and too little support, the *unconditioned request* begins to disarm, attention and waiting start to be discussed, sustained, justified (Bauman, 2000a: 98-99). There appears a *reconfiguration* of the relations in the frame of proximity, on the grounds of "new" rules, that govern larger entities – social communities, and vicinities seen as proximities are an integrant part of them.

III.4. Community. From the long way the concept of community took along the history of sociology, this paper referrers only to those moments that come to sustain the approaches of the sphere of social relations. A first key point was the book written by F. Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft,* where community is seen as synonym to a type of human solidarity of special essence, having as characteristics the intimate, private, exclusive, authentic and long lasting social relations that make its members stay united in spite of the factors that separate them.

Another point of reflection is the work of Max Weber who introduces the idea of *"Vergeminschaftung"* in opposition with *"Vergesellschaftung"* (transposed in association). Weber brings the *subject reserves* to discussion, stressing upon: the interdependence of the systems of relations between persons; the high degree of homogeneity compared to some values and norms shared by community; their appearance as quite introverted elements rather than as formally expressed elements; the existence of a powerful feeling of *in-group* compared to a surrounding *out-group* (Zani & Palmonari – eds., 2003: 32).

All these *attributes* identify a "world" in which unfortunately people cannot get in nowadays, and which is another name for the

lost paradise where those people wished to live, the world people hope to *re-gain*. In late modernity, community is rather one of *non-allegiance*, a community in which the *lonely* get together (Bauman, 2001b: 51). This state of facts, transposed into the vicinal space, which, in contemporarity, leaves room for hostility and conflict, together with the "traditional" love and solidarity, "restrains" theorists to regard vicinity as entity that quickly loses its identity, its clear limits and furthermore, its control upon the human attitudes and reciprocal relationships.

IV. THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTION

IV.1. Socio-spatial entity. No matter if it is all about sociology, anthropology, ethnology or if it is all about other related disciplines, within the framework of social sciences, theorists generally have to deal with a *discursive plurality* that pleads rather for diversity than for adopting a unitary scientific language. From this perspective, the knowledge of the shades a certain term (in this case the neighborhood) has got in different social cultural areas makes its circumscription in a specific context much more feasible. In addition, through such a programmatic approach the *seclusion* in a local perspective is forestalled (Stahl, P. H., 2000: 6) and that could lead to a partisan understanding of mountain realities and to a *distorted* knowledge of the unnamed vicinity.

"To escape" from the familiar space of the Apuseni Mountains and to do some anthropological researches in a *foreign world* (Rosman & Rubel, 1995: 1), in different European social cultural context (Great Britain, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Russia, Slovenia, Finland), is the only method that permits the shaping of a *central corpus* of this object of study, of the references on the basis of which the researcher could later make further developments.

Tarrying upon the *surface structures* of language and going further into the intimacy of what Chomsky called the *deep structures,* owing to a social cultural certain distance that "keeps" us away from the analyzed spaces, the "decoding" of the doublet neighbor – neighborhood which is used in this paper can be undoubtedly seen with a certain dose of reticence. To diminish it and to restrain the areas dominated by the vague, it was necessary to

consult some "native" experts (from the rural field) from each of the countries afore-mentioned.

In the end it results that neighborhood must be perceived not exclusively as a territory and the connected population this one is "serving", or the other way round, the population and territory it lives on, could be considered as *socio-spatial entity (social group among whose members there are basic interactions determined by the settlement of residences in the same spot, also concretized through the periodic exchange of products either in barter or in compensatory services performed later) placed between what belongs to the individual and what belongs to the community, starting point for a well coagulated space of the community and at the same time the place where it tears apart following the way of no-longer-sharing a certain way of being.*

IV.2. Interpersonal experience. In what concerns the *profound elements* of neighborhood, it is necessary to present the ideas of a few authors who even tangentially tackled the local space. Here are some of the aspects presented:

1. Vicinity is the world (form of community given by nature) that makes people not feel *estranged* and *lost* in the context of bitter individualization that takes place on a larger area, *making the existence easier and warmer;*
2. The fact that the "obligation" to embrace a behavior, that is in conformity with the presumed local patterns is a characteristic of this space, and it does not affect our liberty of defining, but, on the contrary, has the purpose of facilitating as less distorted as possible our *reception* and *understanding* by the variety of the *types of neighbors;*
3. It is a *physical area* of small dimensions embedded in a larger region, geographical proximity where there is a reduced network of households which generally *breaks up* the population of a village in small communities based on spatial criteria;
4. There is an *emergent collective life* of the network of social relations that was born among the residents and a set of institutional arrangements that superpose upon these networks, a certain *milieu* whose borders and boundaries, gate and loop holes, crossing points, bridges and tunnels among which one can

take "refuge" for having a "peaceful living", are known only by the neighbors;
5. A form of life that is better maintained through tolerance than through asking for more, a life where one could be "guard off" outside his "four walls".

Further on to the *inductive* approach elaborated before, this part also highlights certain supplementary nuances, essential to a proper comprehension of neighborhood. Thus, vicinity appears as a *"small" world (in duality, as physical area and as collective life emergent from the network of social relations performed within its perimeter), governed by a certain tradition and continuity in time, populated by very diverse types of human beings that are called neighbors, a place of social cohesion, of exchange and mutual help but also of difference, probably symbolically "organized" and "pointed out"*.

IV.3. "Institutional" destructuration. This subchapter deals with an upheaval of the theoretical approach of vicinity (in opposition with the analytical line described in the first two sections of this chapter), a turning towards the "large" conceptual categories of great interest to sociologists, anthropologists, but also other researchers in social sciences. The systematic "refining" in a *deductive* manner of *the maximum extension* under which vicinity is shown in the theoretical field, represented by the concept of *social structure*, was placed in the context of late modernity.

First it must be said that between a perception of the *structures* as observable patterns of the interactions characterized by persistence and stability, or the alternative one, according to which, the "structure" is not directly observable, and to which a third *vision* is added, where "structure" appears as a multidimensional space of different social positions the individual has in a collectivity, or another that outlines the fact that structure must be seen as a configuration of interconnected relations between elements and so on, finding a common denominator from which it has to result unequivocally the essential aspects that define this key element of the social domain is extremely difficult.

Then, it is necessary to show that there appears a supplementary complicacy in the transfer of scientific concerns in the field from *static configurations* to *dynamic* ones, which *re-directs* the

scientific research towards *the social institutions* (Giddens, in Knorr-Cretina & Cicourel – eds., 1981: 164), and the *institutional facts* (Searle, 2000: 15), towards the activities of social actors, of the acting roles, playing scores or plan achievements they fulfill *in a show-world that unfolds like a performance* (Bourdieu, 2000: 81).

Concentrating upon the *social practices* as they result from *radical* approaches of contemporary theoreticians, one can notice that "traditional" social institutions in late modernity, once the codes and regulations which have to be obeyed by the individual decrease continuously, are more and more powerful perceived as "dead but still alive". Under the influence of residential mobility, of a more and more increased skill of satisfying the daily needs on larger territorial areas (Rabrenovich, 1996: 17), the decrease of emotional attachment is translated through the paradigm defined best by the affirmation "to be together without being together" and to share the same physical and social space with others who, a priori and deliberately have no intention to establish any kind of relations.

It can be concluded (just in theory for now) that people "nearby" the rural spaces who know each other in the most intimate details, who helped (do they still?) each other on a reciprocal basis, and who formed (do they still form?) together a spiritual community, are now capable and more "eager" to provoke too much pain. Those who, by yesterday, were extremely peaceful, become perfidious and "bloody" overnight, now being enough to have the presence of a human being nearby for the world to become a hell (Camartin, 1999: 31).

IV.4. Functional "dilution". It is hard to believe that Romanian realities in general and those in the Apuseni Mountains in particular could totally elude from implacable transformations the social space is subjected to in the era of globalization. Besides, the conclusions that emerge from the statements above (and from the following ones) must not be perceived automatically as *final descriptors* of the mountain rural reality analyzed here (the final chapter of this work will be constructed as an empirical, contextual description of it), but as *working hypotheses* subjected to a *re-shaping* by a confrontation with the empirical information. Thus, the theoretical approach follows *the path of an* analytical approach to the *dynamic* of contemporary social realities and the introduction of

some supplementary nuances, peculiar to late modernity that especially characterizes the field of social *relations* and *networks* (intrinsic components of vicinity).

Neighbors always existed everywhere, in the world in smaller "traditional" communities (Mihăilescu - eds., 2002: 19) and the fact that these are *linked* together through complex systems of reciprocal *relations* and *debts* was and still is their essence. From the common feeling that the neighbors look "for you" (and here this is not referred to its negative connotation of intrusion in the private sphere which is under the influence of the wish of knowing everything about the other for to "control" him, but to its positive side, the availability to supervise the neighbor's children, of being attentive to what is happening in the area without being specifically asked), generator of a strong feeling of *local security,* of the feeling of "being home" when you are in the neighborhood, to the diverse forms of social support (affective, material: goods, money and services, information, *companionship,* Wasserman & Galaskiewicz – eds., 1994: 56), local/primary social relations come out from the fact that they transcend the simple personal bonds among individuals.

Traditional vicinity becomes an instance and a mechanism of too severe social control by individuals too much involving in offering help to neighbors, by conserving and not-altering the transmission of patriarchal conception about social order and life, by the settlement and control over lay and religious behavior of each member of the vicinity, and thus it is no longer accepted by modern society. Together with the development of modern means of transport, social relations are no longer restraint to perform only in the *nearby*, and most of the active links are extending over the space of neighborhood. The frequent *face-to-face* type of contacts, which generate strong social links are less associated with supplying emotional support or reciprocal help, not to talk about the weak relations which are not associated with any type of support (Wasserman & Galaskiewicz – eds., 1994: 61).

These dimensions of the vicinal space rests in what here is called: *apparent* vicinity governed by formalism, where the contact between those who belong to it is performed on the basis of some pre-established "rituals" and *profound* vicinity, where the appearance, reciprocal help etc. come naturally, where the process of mediation/negotiation of intentions being unnecessary, in which

the answer expected by the other is "automatically" given. The next chapter will concentrate especially on this distinction, it has be noticed if all that means a spontaneous world also "passes away" in the Apuseni Mountains, in order to leave place to a more rational world; if all that can be described as a world of immediate vicinity becomes a world of much formal "contacts" with people who are estranged from us.

V. EMPIRICAL RECONSTRUCTION

V.1. The universe of meanings. The empirical reconstruction of an "open concept" after its immediate "theoretical foundation" must not be seen here as a trial of *testing* the viability of "construction", in order to discover the possible "weakness" but rather as modality to redefine by adding new meanings resulted from the *confrontation* of the concept with its *referential field*.

The *group* of respondent subjects was chosen having in view two criteria of "selection": an *objective* one – the sex and age variables, respectively a *subjective* second one – the altitude in the Apuseni Mountains where the community is situated (at the bottom of the mountains, the intermediary level or on the peaks).

Of the qualitative interviews done along those few years of researching neighborhood, an *analytical support* had to be chosen and used for to achieve the *empirical foundation* of vicinity, those which cover a large area of *significance* ("commonplaces" but also nuances) for this research theme (twenty-eight unstructured qualitative interviews, done in 2001 in *Salaj* county, commune Valcău – Lazuri village, in commune Sâg – Sâg village, Tusa village; in 2002 in *Cluj* county, commune Căpuşu Mare – Păniceni village; in 2003 in *Cluj* county, commune Măguri-Răcătau, Baltă hamlet, rendered fully in the appendix).

The analysis of signifiers, which compose the *discursive universe* of the subjects, has, beside the linguistic dimension, a social one which was used as object of research. From this perspective it was not needed to resort to a strict interpretation of the texts (narratives) collected through qualitative interviews but rather to *use* these (Eco, 1997: 17) to highlight the significant words and the references words and the referees that lie in their linguistic structures.

Following a process of decantation that meant *to eliminate* the "link" words (or, and, to, from, with, yes, etc.) and those whose frequency of appearance is not significant in the context of this analysis (they appear once, as they are proper names or regionalisms rarely used by community), were identified 9109 words that compose the *sample of initial signifiers*. Having in view their *type* (for verbs and similar forms assumed by verbs: positive, negative forms, reflexive, passive sequence voice, interrogative, past, present, future tenses with their variants etc.; and for nouns, adjectives and so on, the Accusative, Nominative, Gerund cases, the singular, plural, the archaic literary variant etc.) their encoding into 260 *initial categories* of signifiers became possible, and these categories were mostly illustrated through "infinitives" respectively "nouns in the singular".

The next step was the *read-in* of the most frequent used categories of signifiers *(to have*, *he* and *here),* leaving space for a future work focused on the detailed investigation of the other categories. For these categories of signifiers could be taken out of context the following referential fields:

1. *To have:* indifference, misunderstanding, unavailability, need, affiliation, lack, possession, given;
2. *He:* physically close, known, physically distant, different, transitory, random, independent, something which is part of the community, isolated (self isolated), socially closed, socially distant, "un-personified", impersonal, "personified", (not) owner, status, neighbor, relative (kinship);
3. *Here:* territoriality, delimitation, localization, familiar, unfamiliar, proximity, here – personalized, timeless, existence, past, present.

From their analysis resulted the existence of three *different* levels of *way of living (being),* in the Apuseni Mountains (not necessarily *distinctive,* one interfering with the other, a "scrap" without common elements being impossible): the *individual* one, which refers to the household and to those belonging to the *domestic space* and whose main characteristic is formed by the "individual needs" that can hardly be solved when the cooperation with the one outside the household lacks; a second one in which the social relations between those very near, a space of hate and despise, but also of love and help, of an ambivalent HE ("personified" and "de-personified" on the basis of a social closeness

or distance) – *the vicinal space;* finally a third one that circumscribes the social life at the level of community entirely suspended between a "bright" past and an "austere" present – *the space of the community.*

V.2. Social identifications. This approach ranges among a trend initiated by an increasing number of scholars who have lately been more concerned with subjects like: *social identification* – emotional-social links and the cognitive relations of individuals with a given territorial community, *idea of place* – as element of social continuity, *the spatial social conscience* – social construction of spatial and social demarcations.

As to offer *categorical answers* (as last ones and with a high degree of validity) to interrogations like: do people invest time and trust in the relationships with the others or, on the contrary are they afraid of being cheated or robbed, are they afraid of losing their time, does it always seem that what they offer is more than what they get? (Berevoescu, 1999: 77) is impossible as those answers remain tributary to specific social cultural contexts they were researched in, it is necessary to specify that while in some cases in Apuseni one can see a severe *dissolution of the community,* in others it is still in its *incipient stage* or, on the contrary, its appearance is very contested by the majority of those investigated.

Centered upon the *participation to the life of the community,* these researches done in the villages from Apuseni Mountains highlighted the *discrepancy* between the *declarative level* and *daily practice* in rural "communities". Under the auspices of modernity, the participation to the life of the community is transformed here into "delegation" of the community, and the decisions regarding community are not *governed by what is informal,* but they enter under the incidence of what is *formal;* people *are not so united* as they were before, the growth and diversification of daily events that totally absorb the villagers "schedule", are reflecting upon the "time interval" which is allocated to the other and which faces a drastic reduction.

On one hand, the deterioration of inter-human relationships and the appearance of distrust between persons who have lived together for many generations, and on the other hand, the persistence of an extremely pronounced discourse regarding "us"

leads to an *ambivalent attitude* whose possible explanation is to *invoke* two types of "we" that in Apuseni operate at different levels of social reality. On one hand it is all about a *timeless* "we", represented by "elder people", respectively by those who still find themselves in the sphere of what is "traditional" (who *need help but do not get it)* and on the other hand, another "we", one of modern times, *impregnated by utilitarianism* (those who *might offer help but do not do that).*

In spite of the *changes* the rural communities from the mountain villages experience, as long as there is a *historical continuity* expressed through local cultural symbols, through narratives centered on the idea of a "we" – couched by one or many members of mountain settlements and to whom the other members of community subscribe (for example the connection with the territory and the internal/external demarcation of the settlements, which remain *hidden* to the look of unfamiliar with the local narrative researcher), community will continue to exist. It no longer exists or rather it *dis-assimilates* with maximum intensity the *mechanisms* by which individuals and communities traditionally "secured" the *horizontal* and *vertical* continuity (Holmila, 2000: 16-17), and thus the institution of vicinity also passes through this *irreversible process* of transformation.

V.3. Space of vicinity. In the villages from Apuseni, the *strong meaning* theorists were used to perceive the vicinal space – the space of help, the place of intersection of cognitive, esthetic and moral dimension (the three "faces" of social space) – *the profound neighborhood* loses ground in front of a *more diluted variant* which today describes a space of vicinity where the private sphere of each and everyone closes more for the other, the level of intimacy with this decrease in intensity and *the "stranger" at the other door* takes the place of the "classical type" of neighbor – *the apparent neighborhood*.

Going further to a varying of the main dimensions under which it shows itself: a. *existential,* b. *at the level of action and relational,* c. *affective – esthetic*, d. *informational – cognitive – communicational* it can be noticed that if not long ago the *quality of the neighbor* (neighbor with social meaning) was automatically "gained" by the one who lived in proximity (through a socialization customary

regulated), today it does not come naturally, it involves the assumption of an adequate behavior to what is understood by "good neighbor" and the essay to adapt the behavior to the local idea of "we" for the "label" of neighbor (neighbor with spatial meaning) becomes consistent.

Neighbors do not help each other as they used to do in the past, they work only for money, and those who come to help are especially "those older people who know how it was long ago". If few years ago participation to the building of one neighbor's house, for example, was not questioned, as each member of the neighborhood was conscious that in a closer or not so close future will at their turn need help, at present, "in vain will one try to find someone to help him and he would not pay notice to reciprocity, but only if one offers an amount of money".

This idea is affirmed by the great number of *local voices* that bring in the foreground elements as: *envy, cooling of social relations between people, individualism* etc. as characteristics which define the space of vicinity in the past years. People are no longer "in the same line", they ruin your right and then you cannot stand it anymore, "cause everyone is made of flesh". *The rule* of neighborhood of *not keeping enmity,* of *self-control* is now more of an extremely hard to be applied *ideal*. The quarrels which have as consequences the fact that people do not ever get together – "till the days of old", seem to be more frequent today, and the passing time does not solve the animosities between neighbors, as they used to. There are more numerous those who *would not hear,* would not *remain open* to the needs and problems of the others.

Following the researches done in this region it can be noticed that notions like: *unity, feeling of identity, cooperation* and others considered as "a priori" *saved* from the social changes, seem to have less central positions in this space of the community. In turn, the social relations between the "survivors" of this *transition of the community* (seen in the trichotomy *cognitive – esthetic – moral)* decrease as intensity, leading to a *continuous dissolution* of some traditional social "institutions", vicinity belongs to. If the talk about tradition with the meaning showed somewhere above is no longer proper, it more obviously seems that it is impossible from now on to talk about *vicinity in traditional sense,* even if in *specific social*

cultural contexts some elements of it conserve in some form or another.

V.4. Communitarian transitions. In spite of all facts presented above, vicinity in Apuseni *is not dead,* it *continues to exist* at least as long as people will be forced (by the limited territory) to live one next to the other. Today it is no longer what it was years ago, a neighborhood, where the primary social relations decisively leave their mark upon each inhabitant of this region and where living together outside the traditional social networks was unbelievable. It was the space where *interweaving* the dimension of action, the relational dimension with affective-esthetic defined the daily life of the neighbors, living without the other being unconceivable in Apuseni. At present these aspects can be considered as being a part of *vicinity's* irrevocable *disappearance* (between certain limits outlined previously) a vicinity which has here and there maintained its *form* but whose *contents* are deeply changed.

The multiple references of the investigated subjects to a period not very far from the present time, usually evoked through sayings like "in my time", certify the existence at that time of a *time of help and living together* mourned by all that "know how it was then" and in respect to which they express a special nostalgia. In exchange for a "meal and some drink" each one was coming to help when one needed. Not only that one did not raise the question of "help" but it was "the duty" of everyone to contribute to household activities of the other, *the individual good* being fundamental to the *prosperity* of the entire community. It was replaced by a *distribution* of *tasks* between neighbors, and today they try to solve them of an individual manner.

There are many points of view at a local level towards the moment when the social relations enter in the *period of transition,* situated either at the *beginning of collectivization,* or *at the quite after the Revolution in '89*. In the Apuseni village where these reference points are not present (where collectivization was not put applied) people invoke the period of *passage* from a certain *stability* that was "long ago", to the times today when "you don't know what to work if you can work to survive from that, you don't know when to give/sell a thing, whether or not to give/sell it, for how much money to give/sell it". There is in exchange a *unanimous perception*

that: "In what regards *vicinity* or *love*, there was much more of them before. Now you don't have time to discus, no time for help, or for advice. The *competition* that is today is a kind of *non-reconciliation* of *non-judging"*.

Late modernity in a way tries to *rehabilitate* neighborhood, but by sheltering "community" behind the *obstacles* "guarded by armed men", it becomes necessary to ask together with Z. Bauman if it still has something of its specific *substance*. In the landscape of Apuseni Mountains, *the new neighbors* established along the rivers as it is Somes or on the banks of lakes like Belis, Tarnita etc., that owing to some special finance resorts (capital accumulated in urban areas) succeeded in the past years to build *"summer houses"* have less or maybe nothing in common with what was characteristic to the "natives".

These *consumers* of the rural space *develop* around them *spaces empty* of signifiers, enclaves that promote *social distances*. Unavoidably, they come to *interfere* with the natives together with whom they try to *re-compose* the kind of vicinity which was *lost* by the latter and which is wanted to be *re-found* by the former. Their approach will probably be subject of failure as either ones or the others operate with signifiers that lack referential fields, in other words with some models of vicinity that do not have at their bases an *authentic experience of vicinity*.

If the tendencies illustrated here might transform in the next years from marginal into central elements of the space of vicinity, it can be expected *the disjunction* between the physical dimension and the social one to reach alarming quotas even in a region considered to be severely *impregnated with tradition* and *reluctant to modernism,* as it is one of Apuseni Mountains.

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